

## EVALUATION SECTION

The school district and its local partners to the project agree to participate in a national evaluation of the Safe Schools–Healthy Students Initiative, which will collect data on student-risk indicators and outcomes of the programs implemented across sites on an annual basis. Further, the local evaluator will:

- Help district strategically plan activities that will achieve the program goals and objectives
- Respond to the direction of the national evaluator to ensure the collection of high-quality core data
- Design and implement a process evaluation of the local program with assistance from the national evaluator to show results achieved as appropriate
- Provide district with data that can be used to make adjustments in service delivery and improve the overall program
- Design and conduct an outcome evaluation to determine whether an intervention is producing its intended effects

Specifically, the local evaluator, Dr. T. of State University's School of Public Administration and director of the Office of Community Research, will assist the partnership in all forms of interim, annual, and final evaluations. She will teach staff how to gather and log appropriate data to track the progress of the district's Safe Schools–Healthy Students Initiative and all students. Academic and other appropriate data on all students will be gathered continuously by district staff as advised by the local evaluator and reviewed quarterly in reports to the project partners to ensure immediate responses to weaknesses in the plan.

The Search Institute survey of assets was given to district seventh, ninth, and eleventh graders in 2004 and in 2006 and is scheduled to be given again in 2008. In this way, the district is able to gather comparative data on cohorts of young people (i.e., the ninth graders tested in 2006 were mostly the same seventh graders tested in 2004). The year 2008 asset-survey responses will provide a baseline measure of assets early in the proposed process of involving the entire community in building assets. A fourth survey (second during the grant period) in 2008 will measure the effect of the community process on the youth.

Healthy Communities–Healthy Youth has compiled the following list of fifteen characteristics of asset-building communities. The local evaluator will operationalize these characteristics to establish benchmark measures for the city community in the first year of the grant. By the end of the three-year process, the district and its partners will have demonstrated progressive development in each of the characteristics listed:

- All residents take personal responsibility for building assets in children and adolescents.
- The community thinks and acts intergenerationally.
- The community builds a consensus on values and boundaries that it seeks to articulate and model.
- All children and teenagers frequently engage in service to others.
- Families are supported, educated, and equipped to elevate asset building to top priority.
- All children and teenagers receive frequent expressions of support in both informal settings and in places where youth gather.
- Neighborhoods are places of caring, support, and safety.
- Schools — both elementary and secondary — mobilize to promote caring, clear boundaries and sustained relationships with adults.
- Businesses establish family-friendly policies and embrace asset-building principles for young employees.
- Virtually all youth ten to eighteen years old are involved in one or more club, team, or other youth-serving organizations that see building assets as central to their mission.
- The media (print, radio, television) repeatedly communicate the community's vision, support local mobilization efforts, and provide forums for sharing innovative actions taken by individuals and organizations.
- All professionals and volunteers who work with youth receive training in asset building.
- Youth have opportunities to serve, lead, and make decisions.
- Religious institutions mobilize their resources to build assets both within their own programs and in the community.
- The community-wide commitment to asset building is long term and sustained.

Within the first six months of the grant period, the local evaluator will design a plan for evaluating all components of the initiative including, but not necessarily limited to:

- A longitudinal study of the effect of ninth-grade retreat camp on the students' high school careers and number of assets
- A sample population study of at least thirty toddlers from high-risk families and the effect of parent training/counseling and educational intervention on development and/or kindergarten readiness
- A comparison of all sociological and academic data gathered in each of the three years of the grant project indicating reductions in such things as truancy/expulsion, dropping out, disputes in schools, teen depression, teen pregnancy, experimentation with alcohol/drugs, juvenile crime, reports of abuse/neglect, and increases in state-assessment test scores and academic performance against district outcome standards
- A sample study of at least ten high-risk teens identified as potentially violent and the effect of intervention services on behavior and attitude

- A comparative study on reported feelings of “safety” among students in each of the building levels: elementary, middle, freshman, and high school.